

REMARKS

In view of the above Amendment, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9, 10, 12-15, and 17-20 are now present in this application, of which claims 1 and 9 are independent. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 9 have been amended.

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Examiner Interview

Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative during the telephone interviews conducted on October 18, 2007 and on November 30, 2007. During the October 17, 2007 interview, the Examiner agreed to withdraw the finality of the former action filed June 1, 2007 and enter the claims filed on October 1, 2007. The Interview Summary made of record as Paper No. 20071018, accurately summarizes the discussion between Applicants' representative and the Examiner.

During the November 30, 2007 interview, Applicants' representative discussed the rejection of independent claims 1 and 9 as being unpatentable over Kronbetter in view of Jelinek. An Examiner Interview was made of record as Paper No. 20071130. The claims have been amended in the manner discussed during the interview, and are believed to place the application into condition for allowance. In particular, independent claims 1 and 9 have been amended to recite "wherein the first, second, and third members are formed as a continuous member" as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 9, 10, 12-14, and 17-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Kronbetter in view of Jelinek. Claims 7 and 15 also stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kronbetter in view of Jelinek. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Complete discussions of the Examiner's rejections are set forth in the Office Action, and are not being repeated here.

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1 and 9 have been amended to recite combinations of elements in a gasket and a drum washing machine, respectively, including "wherein the first, second, and third members are formed as a continuous member." Applicants respectfully submit that this combination of elements as set forth in independent claims 1 and 9 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Kronbetter and Jelinek, as discussed more fully during the Examiner Interview discussed above. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Additional Cited References

Since the remaining references cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject the claims, but have merely been cited to show the state of the art, no comment need be made with respect thereto.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot.

Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn.

It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

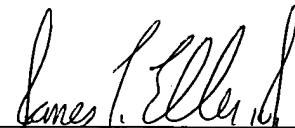
If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone Chad D. Wells, Registration No. 50,875, at (703) 205-8000, in the Washington, D.C. area.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: January 10, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

By 

James T. Eller, Jr.

Registration No.: 39,538

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

8110 Gatehouse Road

Suite 100 East

P.O. Box 747

Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747

(703) 205-8000

Attorney for Applicants

CDW